

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 160732

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT GADISCIO 960 ACTION SECSTATE 5 JUL

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 0960

EXDIS

DEPT ALSO PASS ACTION SECDEF WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, US, SO

SUBJECT: SENATOR BARTLETT AND GROUP AT BERBERA

REF: A. MOGADISCIO 952 B. MOGADISCIO 0953

1. SENATOR BARTLETT AND GROUP VISITED BERBERA JULY 4 AS
SCHEDULED. GROUP ARRIVED BERBERA APPROXIMATELY 0925 LOCAL
AND SPENT ALMOST FIVE HOURS ON GROUND. DEPARTED BERBERA AT 1500
HRS AND RETURNED TO MOGADISCIO EVENING OF JULY 4 VIA BURAO,
WHERE THEY VISITED REFUGEE CAMP.

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2. ACCOMPANYING SENATOR BARTLETT AND HIS THIRTEEN MAN GROUP WAS SOMALI ESCORT CREW HEADED BY SRC MEMBER AND NSS CHIEF AHMED SULEIMAN. GROUP OF AMERICAN JOURNALISTS ALSO ACCOMPANIED SENATOR, INCLUDING TANNER (NY TIMES), DODER (WASHINGTON POST), MULLEN (US NEWS WORLD REPORT), GRIGGS (TIME). ABC NEWSMAN BRANNIGAN WAS DENIED ADMISSION TO PARTY ON GROUNDS THAT HE HAD ALREADY VIEWED BERBERA INSTALLATIONS JUNE 28.

3. FOLLOWING IS LIST OF INSTALLATIONS SENATOR AND GROUP INSPECTED - IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER - WITH FEW GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

A. POL STORAGE SITE: SENATOR AND GROUP LANDED BY HELICOPTER NEAR THIS POINT. INSPECTED STORAGE THANKS AND DISCUSSED POL INSTALLATION'S FUNCTION, CAPACITY, FUEL-MIX, ETC. WITH MANAGER. IDENTIFIED PIPE LINES (I.E., TO MISSILE HANDLING FACILITY, TO NEW AIRFIELD, ETC.).

B. SOVIET BARRACKS AND TRAILER AREA: INSPECTED TRAILERS AND OHS BARRACKS. RUSSIAN-SPEAKING SPECIALIST WITH GROUP ENTERED ONE TRAILER AND ENCOUNTERED TOWEL-WARAPPED RUSSIAN EMERGING FROM SHOWER. (SAME SPECIALIST ALSO ENCOUNTERED IN SAME AREA SOVIET DRIVER OF FUEL TRUCK, WHO WAS DUMBSTRUCK WHEN ASKED - IN RUSSIAN - WHAT HE WAS DOING IN BERBERA.) SULEIMAN TOLD GROUP THAT TRAILERS WERE OCCUPIED BY SOVIETS BUT THAT BARRACKS BUILDINGS FOR SOMALIS AS WELL. RUSSIAN NEWSPAPERS EVIDENT IN BARRACKS BUILDINGS AND TRAILERS.

C. PORT AREA: PROCEEDED TO PORT AREA, WHERE INSPECTED FEW WAREHOUSES ON DOCKS. MOVED TO MOLE, WHERE GANGWAY ENTRANCE TO SOVIET BARRACKS SHIP WAS BLOCKED BY SOVIET MARINE. SHIP WAS FLYING SOVIET FLAG AND SOMALI IN-PORT ENSIGN AS WELL. SULEIMAN IDENTIFIED SHIP AS SOVIET SHIP AND SAID HE COULD NOT RPT NOT GIVE PERMISSION TO BOARD, SINCE IT WAS SOVIET VESSEL.

D. RADIO RECEIVING STATION: FROM PORT AREA, GROUP PROCEEDED BY VEHICLE TO RECEIVER STATION. AT SITE, US COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST LEFT VEHICLE AND ATTEMPTED ENTER AREA. ROUTE CONFIDENTIAL

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WAS BLOCKED BY SOMALI MILITARY GUARD WITH AUTOMATIC RIFLE. SULEIMAN TOLD GROUP THAT HE COULD NOT RPT NOT GIVE PERMISSION TO ENTER BUILDING, WHICH WAS SOVIET RECEIVING STATION. AMERICAN JOURNALISTS WHO WERE LISTENING TOLD SULEIMAN THAT THIS CONTRADICTED STATEMENTS OF PRESIDENT, WHO HAD TOLD THEM THAT NO RPT NO INSTALLATIONS UNDER SOVIET CONTROL. SULEIMAN STUCK TO HIS STATEMENT AND SAID HE HAD NO RPT NO AUTHORITY TO PERMIT ENTRY. FROM THIS POINT ON, NO RPT NO

PHOTOGRAPHS WERE PERMITTED BY SOMALI OFFICIALS DURING
REMAINDER OF TOUR.

3. TRANSMITTER SITE: GROUP THEN PROCEEDED BACK THROUGH
CITY TO TRANSMITTER SITE. GROUP OF SOMALI SOLDIERS DEPLOYED
AROUND STATION AS GROUP APPROACHED. AGAIN, SULEIMAN TOLD
SENATOR THAT THIS WAS SOVIET TRANSMITTER SITE AND HE COULD
NOT RPT NOT AUTHORIZE ENTRY. COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST DID
HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO SCRUTINIZE SURROUNDING ANTENNAS CLOSELY
AND WAS ASTONISHED BY SIZE AND CONFIGURATION OF RHOMBIC
ANTENNAS

F. MISSILE HANDLING FACILITY: ENTIRE GROUP WAS NOT RPT NOT
PERMITTED TO ENTER MISSILE HANDLING AND STORAGE FACILITY.
INSTEAD, SULEIMAN TOOK SENATOR BARTLETT AND FOUR MEMBERS OF
GROUP INTO FACILITY. THEY WERE ACCOMPANIED BY SOMALI NAVAL
OFFICERS, INCLUDING COMMANDING OFFICER OF FACILITY, WHO COULD
NOT RPT NOT ANSWER QUESTIONS PUT TO HIM BY GROUP. GROUP
ENTERED HIGH BAY CHECK OUT BUILDING, BUNKERS, ETC. NEAR
HIGH BAY CHECK OUT AREA, GROUP IDENTIFIED STYX MISSILE
CRATE. SULEIMAN CONFIRMED FOR GROUP THAT SOMALI NAVY HAD
STYX MISSILES, WHICH WAS CLOSELY GUARDED STATE SECRET, BUT
NOT YET HAVE SUPPORTING VESSELS. ACCORDING TO TECHNICIANS
IN SENATOR BARTLETT'S GROUP, HIGH BAY CHECK OUT AREA CAPABLE
OF HANDLING ANY MISSILE IN SOVIET INVENTORY AND OF SIZE FAR
IN EXCESS OF STYX MISSILE REQUIREMENTS. (FYI: AMERICAN
JOURNALISTS WAITING OUTSIDE HEARD OF STYX MISSILE CRATE'S
PRESENCE AND WILL NO DOUBT REPORT IT. END FYI)

G. NEW AIRFIELD: SENATOR AND PARTY THEN PROCEEDED BY VEHICLE
TO NEW AIRFIELD LOCATED APPROXIMATELY FOUR KILOMETERS FROM
MISSILE FACILITY. SOVIET CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT APPARENT.
ALSO INSPECTED FEW BUILDINGS IN AREA.
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4. SENATOR AND GROUP DEPARTED BERBERA AT APPROXIMATELY 1500
HRS LOCAL AND PROCEEDED TO BURAO, WHERE THEY INSPECTED SOMALI
REFUGEE CAMP. RETURNED TO MOGADISCIO AT APPROXIMATELY 2000 HRS.

5. COMMENT: ENATOR AND PARTY BELIEVE VISIT WAS SUCCESSFUL
IN ALL RESPECTS. THEY WERE STRUCK BY VISIBLE CHANGE IN
ATTITUDE OF ACCOMPANYING SRC OFFICER SULEIMAN, WHO HAD NOT
RPT NOT SEEN BERBERA FOR THREE YEARS. AT ONSET OF BERBERA
TRIP, SULEIMAN WAS SOMEWHAT ARROGANT BUT AS EVENTS UNFOLDED,
SENATOR DETECTED CHANGE IN HIS MOOD AS HE CONCEDED THAT
FACILITIES EXISTED AT BERBERA TO WHICH HE HAD NO RPT NO ACCESS.
BERBERA INSPECTION MAY HAVE BEEN EDUCATION FOR SULEIMAN. AT
END OF EXCURSION, SENATOR AND SULEIMAN ON BEST OF TERMS.
POINT WORTH MAKING IS THAT SULEIMAN MAY HAVE BEEN SIAD'S CHOICE

BECUASE HE IS ONE OF FEW PEOPLE WHO CAN UNLOCK ALL DOORS ON SIAD'S
BEHALF IN SOMALIA.

HAMRICK UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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